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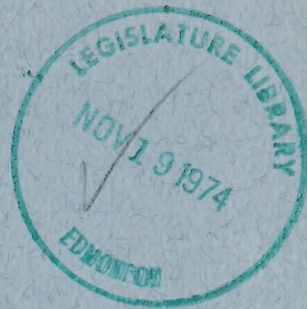
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THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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SUBMITTED BY

THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

TO

THE MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

OF

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

INCLUDING

CERTAIN STATEMENTS OF POLICY

February, 1972

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Calgary, Alberta
February 10, 1972

To: Honorable L. D. Hyndman, Minister of Education
Honorable James L. Foster, Minister of Advanced Education
Members of the Education Committee

Gentlemen:

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations appreciates the opportunity to meet with you and to give you an outline of our organization -- its purpose, structure, policies and work.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations is the only province-wide volunteer organization whose prime concern is education. While Home and School's main thrust is in the areas of early childhood, primary, secondary and special education, we are also concerned with post secondary and continuant education.

At present over 150 local associations in schools across the province make up the Alberta Federation. The Alberta Federation, in turn, is one of ten members of the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations, like all component parts of the Canadian Federation, is non-political, non-racial, non-sectarian and non-commercial. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations is governed by a Constitution approved by the membership and administrated by an Executive (President, Past President, Vice-President, two Regional Vice Presidents, elected at Annual Meetings, and an appointed Treasurer) and a Board of Directors made up of Area Directors (each elected by the associations within the Area they represent).

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations is supported by an assessment on member associations and an annual grant from the Department of Education. The grant has enabled our Federation to obtain the services of an Executive Secretary to supplement the work of volunteers. This full time staff member has been a vital addition, giving continuity to the work of the organization and increasing communication and personal contact with the membership. It has meant a well run office in which material is properly processed and directives of members carried out and many personal visits to Associations, and aspiring Associations from Wanham in the Peace River Area to Irvine in the South East corner of the province. The Executive Secretary helps organize workshops, seminars and conventions, both on a provincial and area level. All Home and School work is carried out as economically as possible using shared accommodation or billeting and travelling by bus (bus passes supplied courtesy Greyhound Lines).

2. Ministers' of Education and Members of Education Committee

Since executives continually change it is vital to have continuity in the office - someone who is familiar with the history of Home and School, work done over the years, sources of information, etc.

The roll of President of the Alberta Federation would be overwhelming, if not impossible, without such assistance and continuity.

The policies of the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations are established by resolutions and discussion at Convention and by surveys of members' opinions. These resolutions are to be reviewed within three years of inclusion in policy, to keep pace with current thought and changes in the Educational System. These policies are presented to various authorities by way of meetings, correspondence and briefs. It has been particularly gratifying to meet annually with the Executive Committee of the Government of Alberta to present Home and School policy on various issues and discuss matters of mutual interest and concern.

The work of Home and School takes many forms. In general it is aimed at the following areas:

- keeping members informed on matters relating to education.
- creating better understanding between parents, students and teachers.
- seeing that the educational, emotional, and physical needs of children are met.
- working for change in educational systems where, after study and research, members believe it is needed.

Local Associations are encouraged to carry out this work through projects and programs designed by them to meet the needs of their own school and community, as well as those that are provincial and national in nature.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations' Office serves as a centre for Home and School operations. Material is received, researched, organized, prepared and distributed. Presentations on behalf of members are prepared and action taken on concerns of the members. Member associations are assisted with organization and leadership training. The Department of Education has provided parents with a voice on various Committees and Boards by way of Home and School representation. It is our Executive's task to appoint competent members of Home and School as representatives, orient them to their task and keep them informed. These are:

- Elementary Curriculum Board
- Secondary Curriculum Board

3. Ministers' of Education and Members of Education Committee

- Committee Articulating High School and University Programs
- Committee Articulating High School and non-University Programs.
- ✓ - Library Advisory Board ✓
- Advisory Committee on Innovative Projects
- Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Education
- Committee on Semestering and the Modified School Year.

An effort is also made to exchange news and views with other organizations both professional and voluntary, who are also concerned with education.

Home and School's largest task is providing channels of communication for parents. We try to carry this out in a number of ways:

- by mail -- of special importance is the monthly newsletter which informs and solicits members' views on specific issues.
- personal visits -- by executive secretary or members of executive.
- assistance with program ideas, material and/or resource people.
- convention programming -- 1972 convention centres around the new Social Studies Program in Grades 1 - 12.
- workshops and seminars -- dealing with current issues, new programs, etc.

Some of the work of the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations has resulted in such tangibles as:

- Improved School Bus Safety
- Appointment of Provincial School Libraries Consultant and more regional Library Assistance.
- School Accident Insurance
- Text book rentals
- Preparation and presentation of Briefs covering such topics as:

School Financing
Bus Regulations
School Act Revision

School Libraries
Vocational Education

4. Ministers' of Education and Members of Education Committee

Perhaps the most important contribution of Home and School is intangible and the most difficult to evaluate - the creation of a favourable climate for change, and growth in education, and in child training. Our public discussions, study groups, community projects have all contributed to a steady and constructive development. In a democratic society voluntary organizations, such as Home and School, play an integral part in creating public opinion for the support of education and social services. Home and School fosters this support through study, discussion and action.

The submission which follows outlines, for your consideration, some of the current thoughts and concerns of our organization and its members.

Respectfully submitted,

Alberta Federation of Home & School Associations
President, (Mrs. J.A.) June L. Lore

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Respectfully Submitted,

Alberta Federation of Home & School Associations
President, (Mrs. J.A.) June 1, 1970

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1. CURRICULUM

A. Mathematics

Your Department is, no doubt, aware of the grave concern of a number of our members with the Mathematics Program as designed from grades 1 - 12. Parents in all sections of the province are questioning the changes in the math courses, the number and variety of courses, the value of such courses, the articulation between levels in the public school system and with institutes of post secondary education. They deplore the emphasis on abstract mathematics at the Junior High School level and the seeming number of students who are frustrated in their Senior High School years because of an inability to understand this subject adequately. It is our contention that this course should be designed and taught to students in such a way that it does not prove to be a road block to their progress through school.

Another concern within this field of mathematics is the apparent neglect of the Metric System. With metrification looming so large on the horizon the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations believes this subject should be given priority in curriculum building. This concern was voiced in 1962 when members passed the following resolution:

"Begin a study of the problem of changing from the English system of weights and measures, with a view to adopting the metric system for Canada".

It is understood that Mr. W. Lencucha is chairing a committee conducting a survey on the effects of the new

math courses in the elementary grades. We would appreciate receiving copies of this report when the survey is completed.

B. Social Studies

Because a new Social Studies Program, Grades 1 - 12, has just been introduced across the province and the members of our Federation have had very little opportunity to become acquainted with it, the greater part of our Annual Convention, to be held in March, will be spent exploring this subject. We have had very good cooperation from the Curriculum Branch and the Red Deer Regional Office of the Department of Education, as well as the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations appreciates this cooperation which assists it to hold conventions, workshops, and seminars which are one means whereby key people can become informed and thus do much within their local community to narrow the "communications gap" and create interest in and understanding of the educational system.

2. EXAMINATIONS

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations wishes to thank Education Minister Hyndman for the opportunity afforded recently to meet with Dr. Hawkesworth, Deputy Minister, to discuss the question of grade 12 examinations. (We, too, hope this will be but the first of such meetings to discuss mutual concerns.)

The impression gained from this meeting was that there seemed to be general agreement among educators that the present form of departmental examinations should be replaced. Those members of Home and School present at that meeting generally supported this view.

The points stressed by these members were:

- That there be adequate information and guidance to both parents and students as to the standard and system of any final evaluation of students.
- If a system of accreditation is approved it must be province-wide and of a universal standard.
- Students must have a right of appeal from teachers' assessment and for this purpose some form of examination or test is necessary.
- There must be quality control of education and we would suggest standards must be set by the Department.
- Tests or examinations would be necessary for scholarship purposes.
- That all students be allowed the choice of taking Departmental examinations regardless of the high school stream or program they are taking.
- It was suggested that there be a Field Staff of the Department of Education which would act as an inspection and up-grading team to work with the School Staff, Students, Parents and the Community.

To further supplement the views and concerns expressed by the representatives from the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations at this meeting a questionnaire was circulated in our January Newsletter and additional concerns and points of view will be forwarded to the Deputy Minister for his information.

We appreciate the assurance that we will have a further opportunity to study the report on Examinations and make further recommendations.

3. LIBRARIES

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations is interested in the continued development of the School Library Program in the province of Alberta. Certainly improvements have been made in the calibre of school library service but have the improvements made been enough?

The appointment of the "School Libraries Consultant" now known as the "Consultant in Media and Curriculum" was a step forward and long overdue. Undoubtedly "invaluable service is provided to school boards and teachers across the province" by this one person, but what has been done about the provision of back-up staff, quarters and budget? (See AFHSA Brief on School Libraries presented to the Worth Commission, June, 1970)

The Department of Education has set up Regional Offices and appointed Consultants in Media and Instruction to several of these offices. Do these Consultants have a background in Media and Instruction? What correlation will there be between work done by these Consultants and the Education Consultant in Media and Curriculum? What provision has been made for Regional Office assistance in Media and Instruction in the Northern areas?

In a Brief to the Worth Commission on Educational Planning the Alberta Federation suggested the provision of central cataloguing services as a start towards a provincial library service centre. A "Survey of the Educational Media Services of the Calgary Public Schools" was undertaken by Professors Harry E. Newsom and John G. Wright (University of Alberta) as coordinators; Miss Mary Gaver, (Library Consultant from

Bro Dart Industries) as Chief Consultant; and others. This survey team suggested the possibility of providing the cataloguing, book preparation and other services of the Centre to other school libraries in the province of Alberta. It was the opinion of the team that it would be unfortunate if other schools could not benefit from the high quality of work done in Calgary.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations believes that the advancement of school library service is contingent upon: - a survey (being made) of Educational Media Services across the province as well as services offered by regional and public libraries, - a review of all library grants (all grants are not tied to a standard of performance), - a re-examination of space allowances for building school libraries, - a development of a master plan for provincial library service which will allow for a strong school library system on one hand, a strong public library system on the other, with a policy of cooperation between both. (See Page 42-43 Standards of Library Service for Canadian Schools, Ryerson Press) This will make it possible to achieve the objectives of education for all students of this province.

4. TEACHER EDUCATION

One of our prime concerns is Teacher Education and Certification.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations would again like to draw your attention to the statements made in our Brief to the Executive Committee, January, 1970:

"We note in a recent article by the President of the Alberta Teachers' Association, dealing with the surplus of teachers, the reiteration of their long standing recommendation of a four-year level of education for beginning teachers.

Mr. Stonehocker continues "It is especially urgent that the requirement of a graduated series of practical classroom experiences be included in any proposed revision of certification requirements. The culmination of these experiences should be a compulsory period of internship since the gap between theory and practice still exists."

It seems to us that now, when the shortage of teachers is at an end, is the time to implement a policy of higher requirements for teacher certification.

To support this contention we quote from the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations' Position Paper on Teacher Education:

"We believe that the increasingly complex role of the teacher is such that adequate preparation cannot be completed in less time, and we urge that a Bachelor of Education degree or its equivalent be made the minimum requirement for all persons entering the teaching profession in Alberta.

Such preparation is equally as important for teachers of the elementary grades as for those in the high schools.

In addition, the teacher who has a longer period of training is more likely to remain in the profession because he has a larger stake in it.

Short periods of training encourage the transient who leaves as soon as anything better is offered. To continue to expend money in training persons who leave at the first opportunity would seem to be not only a waste of money on the part of the government, but also a waste of effort on the part of the Faculties of Education.

Classroom Experience: No amount of theory can substitute for actual classroom experience. The present practice of two periods of 3 - 4 weeks each of student teaching in city schools is woefully inadequate in giving the student an opportunity to "try his hand" at teaching and to experiment with the techniques he has learned.

Internship for May and/or June is offered in some areas and allows the student to gain a little more classroom experience, but has several disadvantages:

- a. It takes place at the end of the school year when routine is long established and most classes are at the "review" stage, offering little opportunity for experimentation or imaginative presentation.

- b. One or two months is too short a period for an effective internship.
- c. The intern's duties are likely to be more akin to those of the teacher's aide than those of a classroom teacher.
- d. School Boards are inclined to regard it, with some justification, as a recruiting device and a period of orientation to a particular system.
- e. Because of the cost of university education students find they must seek more remunerative summer employment.

For these reasons, it would seem that the present practices of student teaching and internship should be replaced by a longer period of practical experience, such as one term or one semester, probably during the third year of the education program.

Careful consideration must be given to placement of the student in a compatible situation, where a good relationship can be established between student and co-operating teacher.

In addition, co-operating teachers and students should be made very well aware of the aims of the internship program, i.e. to enable the student to observe experienced teachers in the classroom, to experience at first hand the challenges of teaching, to experiment with methods of teaching, and to gain experience in classroom management, under competent supervision.

During the internship period, interviews and seminars would allow both the students and the co-operating teachers to discuss problems and explore possible solutions with members of the faculty.

Evaluation by the co-operating teacher should be given serious consideration, not forgetting the reaction of the students in the classroom to the student teacher's efforts.

In view of the inadequacy of the present practices, we would recommend that the Department of Education continue consulting with the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and the Faculties of Education, with a view to developing more specific policies on Teacher Internship, and that the costs of this internship be acknowledged as an approved cost under the Foundation Program for School Financing."

Several Home and School members are participating in the "Goals of Teacher Education" Survey, being conducted by Drs. Clarke and Coutts, University of Alberta, and supported

by a grant from the Alberta Advisory Committee on Educational Studies. We have appreciated the opportunity to express lay points of view in this important area. Because teachers and their preparation for their task are basic to our educational system we anxiously await the results of this study.

We know that your Department has this matter of Teacher Certification under investigation and would like to take this opportunity to emphasize again our concern with the maintenance of teaching standards. To quote from our Position Paper on Teacher Education: "Undoubtedly, the impact of the computer age will have increasing effects on our education system. Such changes should be easily accepted by the young Education student, who is a product of his age. However, the teacher accustomed to more traditional methods, may require help to adapt to new programs and concepts.

Immigrating teachers and teachers returning to the profession after an absence of five years or more should be required to undergo a program of up-grading and orientation to familiarize them with new concepts and techniques presently in use.

In addition, periodic re-evaluation of qualifications should be a requirement for retention of a teaching certificate. Teachers presently employed must undertake to keep their qualifications up to date as a part of their professional responsibility. Evening courses, summer school, and in-service training are excellent, but the onus is on the

individual teacher to take advantage of them. The Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and administrators at all levels should make every effort to encourage them to do so."

5. SCHOOL BOARD HIRING POLICIES

At a combined workshop and Board of Directors meeting held at the Agricultural and Vocational College in Olds during August, 1971, concern was expressed with the differences in hiring policies of School Boards. It was the decision of those present that our Federation should investigate this further. This work is still proceeding and no final evaluation is possible at this time. Supplementing a study done by the Acting Executive Director of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and using the same basic questions, our committee has circulated not only our own associations but the Boards not previously surveyed. Reports are still being received from these sources and it is not known whether anything significant will evolve. Our Committee has promised to send a copy of our report to the Alberta School Trustees' Association when completed.

6. UP-GRADING OF OLDER SCHOOLS

"The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations believes that teachers are the greatest single factor in the success of a school system." But if teachers are to insure a good educational program they must have adequate facilities and equipment to implement any program of studies.

In 1971, Four Million was ear-marked for the renovation of older schools and it was hoped that 120 schools throughout the province would be up-graded. This fund (\$2 million of which was to be used in rural areas) was to improve the functional nature of the schools with additions of libraries, laboratories, etc.

We are concerned as to how this program has proceeded.

While realizing that the number of schools mentioned refers to those with the most serious inadequacies, how was it determined which schools were to receive part of this fund and how has the fund been administered. Our information seemed to indicate this was a one year only allotment.

What happens if the fund was not used during the year? Has any provision been made for continuing up-grading of equipment and facilities to insure that these schools do not deteriorate and insure that developments in programs and changes in curriculum can be implemented in all parts of the province. We feel this is necessary in order to provide desirable preventative services and ensure the best possible educational opportunities to all students both elementary and secondary.

7. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

In August, 1971 the then Ministers' of Education, Culture, Youth, and Recreation indicated that their Departments would cooperate in trial projects that would assist communities in employing life long education coordinators. The purpose of these would be to encourage involvement in, and use of, the schools by the community, and involvement in, and use of, the community by the schools.

These trial projects were to be conducted over a three-year period and directed by a study committee made up of representatives of the two Government Departments and other interested local persons.

Has any thought been given by your Department to proceeding with these trial projects? If so, the appointment of Home and School members to the study committees should be considered. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations has done some study on the Community Use of Schools and several local member associations are actively promoting, or are involved in, such projects.

One of our concerns is that everyone seems to want joint use of facilities at a charge to the educational dollar.

8. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

It is our belief that continuing Educational Research is vital to the development of our Education System. As tangible evidence of our support for Research, the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations maintains a membership in the Alberta Advisory Committee on Educational Studies, contributing 1% of the annual grant to support its work.

We were pleased to support and participate in the Innovative Project Seminars jointly sponsored by AACES and the Innovative Projects Advisory Board. Approximately twenty members attended, at their own expense, the various seminars throughout the province. Through Home and School representation on the Innovative Projects Advisory Board we are able to contribute a lay point of view and gain an overview of

action in this area. Innovative Projects could be a useful method of promoting and supporting developmental research, especially at the classroom level.

The submission prepared by the Educational Research Committee of the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations and sent to the Ministers' of Education in January, 1972, outlines our interest and concern regarding Education Research. At this time we wish to emphasize a few points.

We trust that the Government will not make a hasty decision with regard to Innovative Projects. Consideration must be given to the short time it has been in operation and anticipated adjustments to the program.

We were dismayed by the decision to phase out HRRC. To abandon the only vehicle we presently have to coordinate efforts in Educational Research, without any alternative ready to fill the gap, seems very ill-advised. This decision should certainly be reconsidered. Educational Research must not be left in limbo.

9. MODIFICATION OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations was represented by ten persons at the Invitational Conference on the Modified School Year, Red Deer, October 14, 15, 1971.

Some local member associations considered the question of the Modified School Year as far back as three years ago. Following the Conference at Red Deer, workshops and seminars have been held by Home and School Associations across the province,

and we are pleased to report that parent participation has been gratifying.

More seminars and workshops are scheduled for the next few months, and we will be submitting a full report on the findings and recommendations resulting from these sessions.

10. SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

We appreciate the courtesy and consideration shown the members of the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations presenting the concerns of our organization with regard to School Bus Safety Regulations and traffic violations against school buses. We commend the Department of Highways and Transport for its work in this respect.

We realize this is outside the jurisdiction of this Department but in correspondence with the Department of Highways and Transport last fall pertinent to violations of the Highway Traffic Act, Section 128, "cars passing school buses when stopped to load or unload students", we asked in our letter dated October 21, 1971 for:

- "(a) A stepped-up surveillance by the Highway Patrols
- (b) A concerted program of education (and warning) directed at the Driving Public via the press, radio and television.
- (c) Special educational programs - both in schools and outside the school - directed towards the students and their parents."

Mr. O.A. Griggs, Vice Chairman and Secretary, Highway Traffic Board, replied November 9, 1971, "The matter of educational programs is something which should be taken up with the Department of Education as this Board has no jurisdiction in this area."

What can be done by your Department as to (b) and (c) above to eliminate the incidence of these violations before a child is killed or severely injured. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations is prepared to assist with such educational programs in any way it can.

11. CANADIAN HOME AND SCHOOL AND PARENT-TEACHER FEDERATION

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to the Government of Alberta and the Department of Education, in particular, for the support and contribution received at the time of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation, hosted by the Alberta Federation and the Calgary Area Home and School Associations in June, 1971.

The main project undertaken by the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation following this convention was a survey of the Smoking Habits of School Children. This survey was conducted in cooperation with the Department of National Health and Welfare and the University of Waterloo.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations thanks the Department of Education for the help and co-operation it has received with its participation in this survey. Over 7,000 questionnaires were distributed in Alberta in the approximate ratio of 2:1, Grades 3 - 9 and Grades 10 - 12. We are particularly grateful to Dr. R.E. Rees and Dr. E.K. Hawkesworth for their help with this distribution. This survey, the largest ever undertaken on

this Continent (an estimated 100,000 students across Canada) was designed to obtain information so that a program of education on the hazards of smoking, appropriate to young people, could be formulated.

As soon as copies of the results are received from our National Office we will be pleased to forward one to you.

The Canadian Federation is also surveying the growth of Local Advisory Councils (and their counterparts) across Canada. We are participating in this as well as undertaking a study of the make-up, function and value of such Councils.

The following is a list of other areas receiving attention by the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation:

- National Office of Education
- Program of Aid to Children in Developing Countries
- World University
- Indian Education -- Policy Statement of the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations, Page 36 --
"The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations believes that Indian people should have the same education, legal, economic, health and social opportunities, accorded other Canadians, with the right to retain their own culture."
- Pollution -- A 1971 Resolution urges all Departments of Education across Canada to include courses on environmental education in the curriculum, as well as the incorporation of such concepts in other subject areas. We commend the Department of Education for giving leadership in this area.

The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations appreciates your consideration of this presentation and the opportunity for this exchange.

We hope that, as in the past, we shall be granted the privilege of meeting annually with you and other interested members of the Executive Committee, to present the views of our members and talk informally on matters of mutual concern.

Education appears to be approaching a crisis. It is beset by doubts, misunderstandings, challenges and strife - not only in the classroom, but in the community, among students, teachers, trustees and the public in general.

Home and School, because of its prime concern with education and its non-partisan nature, has an obligation to help head off this crisis. We must work to bring about better understanding between the public, teachers and trustees. We must keep the public informed on all aspects of education and act as a sounding board for public opinion. We must help parents become informed partners in the education of their children.

No one realizes better than we that this is a gigantic task, that without more resources we can only scratch the surface. Imagine what our volunteers could accomplish if they had the assistance of a full time worker in each of the Northern, Southern and Central regions!

In the interest of education we look forward to continuing support from your Department. The grant received from the

Department of Education is vital to our work as is access to educational information and material. It is only through the help and cooperation of your Department, as well as other groups directly involved in education, that we can perform the kinds of services needed to further the cause of education in Alberta.

Respectfully submitted,

Alberta Federation of Home and School
Associations.

